

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 12025 161311Z

44

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00

INR-11 NSAE-00 OMB-01 CIEP-03 TRSE-00 EB-11 COME-00

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R 161116Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8712

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU

CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI

COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, VS

SUBJECT: REDUCTION IN CONTRACTOR SUPPORT FOR VNAF.

REF: A. DAO/AOSAF 160045Z (NOTAL) B. DAO/AOSAF 160015Z (NOTAL)

1. DAO MESSAGE TO CINCPAC AND CINCPACAF REFERENCED ABOVE CALL FOR SHARP REDUCTIONS IN AMERICAN CONTRACTOR AND TECHREP SUPPORT FOR VNAF FOR THE REMAINDER OF FY 75. THE REDUCTIONS, WHICH WERE WORKED OUT JOINTLY WITH VNAF, HAVE BEEN MANDATED BY THE MORE STRINGENT FUNDING AND OPERATIONAL LIMITATIONS IMPOSED ON THE VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE BY THE CURRENT PROSPECT OF A \$700 MILLION DAV APPROPRIATION. OVER-ALL, THE REDUCTIONS WILL CUT THE COST OF CONTRACTOR AND TECHREP SUPPORT FROM A TOTAL OF \$46,138,332 AUTHORIZED AT THE BEGINNING OF FY 75 TO \$26,300,000.

2. IN SUMHFRY, DAO HAS REQUESTED THAT THE FOLLOWING CONTRACT MODIFICATIONS BE MADE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND NOT LATER THAN OCTOBER 1:

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 12025 161311Z

A. CONTRACT ENGINEERING TECHNICAL SERVICES (CETS). NUMBER

OF TECHREPS TO BE REDUCED FROM TOTAL OF 130 AUTHORIZED AT BEGINNING OF FY 75 TO 89.

B. CONTRACTORS IN SUPPORT OF VNAF. NUMBER OF AMERICAN CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL WORKING WITH VNAF TO BE REDUCED FROM 1688 AUTHORIZED AT BEGINNING OF FY 75 TO 416. VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEES OF CONTRACTORS TO GO DOWN FROM 2829 TO 1947. IN FACT, ACTUAL REDUCTIONS WILL BE SLIGHTLY LESS THAN OUTLINED ABOVE SINCE CONTRACTORS ARE SHORT ABOUT 270 AMERICANS AND 100 VIETNAMESE AT THIS TIME.

3. VNAF TOOK THE LEAD IN MAKING THE HARD DECISIONS ABOUT THE REDUCTIONS IN CONTRACTOR AND TECHREP SUPPORT. IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE HEAVIEST CUTS SHOULD BE MADE IN AMERICAN CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL WHO AUGMENT VIETNAMESE WITH SMALLER REDUCTIONS TAKEN IN TECHREP SUPPORT. ALTHOUGH THE REDUCTIONS WILL HAVE HEAVIEST IMPACT AT BIEN HOA AIR BASE, PERSONNEL WORKING AT AIR BASES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WILL ALSO BE AFFECTED.

4. MISSION DOES NOT PLAN TO MAKE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT HERE ABOUT THE REDUCTIONS AND STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT SIMILAR COURSE OF ACTION BE FOLLOWED ELSEWHERE. INEVITABLY, NEWS OF THE REDUCTIONS WILL BECOME PUBLIC VERY QUICKLY AND WE WOULD PROPOSE TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS AS FOLLOWS:

Q. WE HEAR THAT AMERICAN CONTRACTOR SUPPORT FOR VNAF IS BEING CUT OUT. WHAT'S GOING ON?

A. AS YOU KNOW, UNDER REDUCED MILITARY ASSISTANCE LEVELS FOR VIET-NAM IN FY 75, ECONOMIES MUST BE SOUGHT AT ALL LEVELS OF RVNAF. IT IS REGRETTED, BUT REDUCTIONS IN THE SIZE OF AMERICAN CONTRACTOR SUPPORT FOR VNAF IS ONE OF THE AREAS WHERE SAVINGS WILL HAVE TO BE MADE IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE HIGHER PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS.

Q. WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF THE REDUCTION?

A. THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN TECHREPS WILL BE REDUCED FROM 130 TO ABOUT 90. AND THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL, THOSE WHO ARE ENGAGED IN MAINTENANCE SUPPORT, WILL GO DOWN FROM 1688 AUTHORIZED AT THE BEGINNING OF FY 75 TO APPROXIMATELY 416.

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 12025 161311Z

Q. ARE THERE ANY VIETNAMESE INVOLVED IN THIS CUTBACK ?

A. YES, THE NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE EMPLOYED BY THE AMERICAN CONTRACTORS WILL BE REDUCED FROM AN AUTHORIZED 2829 TO ABOUT 1950. IN ACTUAL FACT, THE EXTENT OF THE REDUCTIONS WILL BE SOMEWHAT LESS THAN THESE FIGURES INDICATED BECAUSE THE CONTRACTORS ARE CURRENTLY SHORT OF THEIR AUTHORIZED STRENGTH BY 270 AMERICANS AND 100 VIETNAMESE

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Q. WHERE ARE THE CONTRACTORS LOCATED?

A. A SIZABLE NUMBER ARE AT BIEN HOA AIR BASE. HOWEVER, CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL ARE WORKING THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND REDUCTIONS WILL ALSO BE MADE AT THESE LOCATIONS.

Q. WHEN WILL THIS TAKE PLACE?

A. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. PRRBABLY WITHIN THE MONTH.

Q. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE AMERICANS WHO ARE AFFECTED BY THE CUTBACK?

A. THIS WILL DEPEND ON THE CONTRACTOR. THEY WILL RECEIVE ALL BENEFITS GUARANTEED TO THEM UNDER THEIR CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.

Q. WILL THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN SUPPORT HURT THE COMBAT CAPABILITY OF VNAF?

A. THIS IS NOT A WITHDRAWAL OF CONTRACTOR SUPPORT. IT IS A REDUCTION. ESSENTIAL CONTRACTOR AND TECHREP PERSONNEL WILL REMAIN TO SUPPORT VNAF. VNAF IS IN THE PROCESS OF STREAMLINING ITS FORCE STRUCTURE. A DIMINUTION IN THE SIZE OF AMERICAN CONTRACTOR SUPPORT IS CONSONANT WITH THIS PROCESS. VNAF HAS INCREASED ITS POOL OF TRAINED TECHNICIANS AND MECHANICS AND THE MOST SIZABLE REDUCTION IN AMERICAN PERSONNEL WILL BE MADE IN THOSE WHO ARE AUGMENTING THE VIETNAMESE. WHILE THE IMMEDIATE COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS SHOULD NOT BE AFFECTED, THE REDUCTIONS WILL MAKE THINGS MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE VNAF. THE CONTRACTOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 SAIGON 12025 161311Z

REDUCTIONS ARE BEING MADE WITH CONSIDERABLE RELUCTANCE AND ONLY BECAUSE FUNDS ARE SIMPLY NOT SUFFICIENT TO ACCOMMODATE ANY BUT THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ITEMS.

Q. WHO DECIDED TO MAKE THESE CUTS?

A. THE DECISIONS WERE MADE JOINTLY BY VNAF AND US.

Q. WILL CUTS BE MADE IN AMERICAN CONTRACTOR SUPPORT FOR OTHER ELEMENTS OF RVNAF?

A. AS PREVIOUSLY STATED, THE VIETNAMESE ARE LOOKING AT THE TOTALITY OF THEIR FORCE STRUCTURE WITH A VIEW TO ACHIEVING GREATER EFFICIENCY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT OTHER REDUCTIONS WILL BE MADE IN THE GENERAL AREA OF CONTRACTOR SUPPORT.

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